

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 TUNIS 01917 01 OF 03 171741Z

46

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEAE-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15

INR-07 CIAE-00 /056 W

----- 050695

P 171541Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2070

INFO WHITE HOUSE WASHDC PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY RABAT PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI PRIORITY

USCINCEUR

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 3 TUNIS 1917

USCINCEUR FOR POLAD

WHITE HOUSE FOR VICE PRESIDENT'S OFFICE - CAPT HOWE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS TS LY AG US

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR'S FAREWELL CALL ON PRIME MINISTER:

TUNISIA'S CONCERN WITH THREATS

1. SUMMARY:

IN FAREWELL CALL, AMBASSADOR REVIEWED WITH PRIME MINISTER NOUIRA STATE OF CURRENT COOPERATION BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES AND STRESSED CONTINUING USG INTEREST IN TUNISIA. PRIME MINISTER EXPRESSED SATISFACTION THAT US ASSISTANCE COUNTINUES AND PLEASURE WITH IMPORTANT GESTURE OF VICE PRESIDENT ROCKEFELLER'S ATTENDANCE AT 20TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS. PRIME MINISTER, HOWEVER, EXPRESSED CONSIDERABLE CONCERN WITH SUBSTANTIAL SOVIET INFLUENCE IN NEIGHBORING ALGERIA AND LIBYA, AS WELL AS THREATS POSED BY THESE TWO COUNTRIES TO TUNISIA.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 TUNIS 01917 01 OF 03 171741Z

ALTHOUGH AMBASSADOR SOUGHT TO REASSURE PRIME MINISTER THAT

USG HAS NOT RPT NOT ABANDONED ITS "FRIENDS" ABORAD, PRIME MINISTER ARTICULATED VIEW THAT UNEASINESS EXISTS AMONG THESE "FRIENDS" AS A RESULT OF PUTATIVE US IRRESOLUTION IN FACE OF SOVIET EXPANSION. PRIME MINISTER, IN AGREEING WITH AMBASSADOR'S OBSERVATION THAT TUNISIA'S SECURITY LIES ESSENTIALLY IN STRENGTH OF ITS SOCIETY, EFFECTIVENESS OF ITS ANTI-SUBVERSION EFFORTS AND SUPPORT BY ITS "FRIENDS" ABROAD, STATED NEVERTHELESS THAT TUNISIA NEEDS TO BEEF UP ITS MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT TO A CERTAIN EXTENT FOR DETERRENT REASONS. END SUMMARY.

2. DURING MY FAREWELL CALL ON PRIME MINISTER NOUIRA, MARCH 17, I EXPRESSED SATISFACTION THAT US-TUNISIAN RELATIONS CONTINUE TO BE CLOSE, THAT COMMON INTERESTS AND IDEALS BIND US, AND THAT PROGRAMS OF COOPERATION STILL EXIST. IN LATTER CONNECTION I NOTED THAT CREDITS WHICH WE ARE PROVIDING FOR MILITARY PURPOSES HAVE BEEN TRIPLED THIS YEAR AND THAT TOTAL AMERICAN ECONOMIC "COOPERATION" TO TUNISIA, BOTH GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE, IS CURRENTLY AVERAGING ABOUT \$11 MILLION A YEAR. I STATED THAT AN ADDITIONAL ELEMENT IN THE U.S. ASSISTANCE PROGRAM THIS YEAR, WE HOPE, WILL BE RENEWAL OF SOME TITLE I PL-480 SHIPMENTS TO TUNISIA. I STRESSED THAT WHILE TUNISIA'S EXCELLENT CROPS THIS YEAR DO NOT RPT NOT MAKE IT EASY TO JUSTIFY SUCH WHEAT ASSISTANCE AT THIS TIME, SECRETARY KISSINGER HAS NEVERTHELESS ASKED CONGRESS FOR APPROVAL AS A FURTHER DEMONSTRATION OF US INTEREST AND SUPPORT FOR TUNISIA. FINALLY, I CALLED ATTENTION TO SIGNIFICANCE OF USG GESTURE OF SENDING VICE PRESIDENT ROCKEFELLER TO REPRESENT MY COUNTRY AT 20TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS NEXT WEEKEND.

3. PRIME MINISTER EXPRESSED GREAT APPRECIATION THAT VICE PRESIDENT ROCKEFELLER IS COMING AND ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THIS IS INDEED AN IMPORTANT GESTURE. HE EXPRESSED SATISFACTION THAT US ASSISTANCE CONTINUES AND SAID THAT TUNISIAN GOVERNMENT WELCOMES US "DECISION" TO RENEW TITLE I SHIPMENTS THIS YEAR. HE PARTICULARLY TOOK NOTE OF FACT THAT THIS ACTION IS ESSENTIALLY A POLITICAL GESTURE, AND HE FOUND THIS REASSURING.

4. I COMMENTED THAT I WAS AWARE THAT PAST DEVELOPMENTS
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 TUNIS 01917 01 OF 03 171741Z

IN CONNECTION WITH ANGOLA HAVE RAISED SOME QUESTIONS IN TUNISIAN MINDS REGARDING US CAPABILITY AND DETERMINATION TO STAND BY ITS FRIENDS AND TO CONTINUE TO SERVE AS AN EFFECTIVE LEADER OF FREE WORLD. I EXPRESSED BY PERSONAL VIEW THAT CONGRESS WILL SOON COME TO UNDERSTAND, PARTICULARLY AFTER THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS, NECESSITY OF GRANTING THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH SUFFICIENT SCOPE TO PERMIT US TO FULFILL ITS OBLIGATIONS ABROAD. US, I CONTINUED, WILL NOT STAND ASIDE FOR LONG IF

SOVIETS PERSIST IN EXTENDING THEIR POWER AND MARXIST DOCTRINE DEEP INTO SUCH FAR AWAY PLACES AS AFRICA. SOVIET PERSISTENCE IN THIS REGARD IS BOUND TO UNITE CONGRESS AND EXECUTIVE BRANCH IN ADVOCATING A POLICY OF VIGOROUS US REACTION. I CALLED ATTENTION TO PUBLIC DECLARATIONS OF PRESIDENT FORD AND SECRETARY KISSINGER WARNING AGAINST FURTHER CUBAN TROOP PRESENCE IN AFRICA. I ALSO REFERRED TO SECRETARY'S REMARKS BEFORE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE ON MARCH 16 DESCRIBING TWO PLANES ON WHICH USG MUST APPROACH ITS RELATIONS WITH USSR.

5. PRIME MINISTER ACKNOWLEDGED EXISTENCE OF CONCERN AMONG "AMERICA'S FRIENDS" ABROAD REGARDING PUTATIVE U.S. IRRESOLUTION IN FACE OF SOVIET EXPANSION. HE SAID THAT CUBAN TROOP DEPLOYMENT CONTINUES ON CONTINENT OF AFRICA, NOTING IN PARTICULAR THEIR CURRENT PRESENCE IN ALGERIA. PRIME MINISTER STATED THAT TUNISIAN FINDS ITSELF IN AN EXCEEDINGLY DIFFICULT POSITION AT THIS POINT, THREATENED BY ITS NEIGHBORS ON BOTH SIDES. TUNISIA IS VERY CONVERGED WITH SUBSTANTIAL SOVIET INFLUENCE IN BOTH ALGERIA AND LIBYA. IF SOVIET UNION HAS IMPRESSION THAT IT CAN ACT WITHOUT FEAR OF US REACTION, IMPLICATIONS WITH REGARD TO TUNISIA ARE SERIOUS. WHAT CAN TUNISIA DO IN THE FACE OF DETERMINED EFFORTS FROM OUTSIDE TO INTERVENE HERE? HE CLAIMED THAT PRESIDENT BOUMEDIENE HAS DECLARED UNEQUIVOCALLY THAT DIFFERENCES WITH TUNISIA ARE IDEOLOGICAL. THE IMPLICATION, CONTINUED THE PRIME MINISTER, IS THAT ALGERIA WILL PUT PRESSURE

SECRET

NNN

SECRET

PAGE 01 TUNIS 01917 02 OF 03 171709Z

46

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEAE-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15

INR-07 CIAE-00 /056 W

----- 050055

P 171541Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2071

INFO WHITE HOUSE WASHDC PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY RABAT PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI PRIORITY
USCINCEUR

S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 3 TUNIS 1917

USCINCEUR FOR POLAD

WHITE HOUSE FOR VICE PRESIDENT'S OFFICE - CAPT HOWE

ON TUNISIA TO CHANGE ITS BASIC SYSTEM AND FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES. TUNISIA, HE DECLARED, HAS NO INTENTION OF CREATING A LARGE MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT. THIS IS NOT RPT NOT COMPATIBLE WITH ITS NATURE OR CAPABILITIES. BUT TUNISIA DOES NEED TO IMPROVE ITS DEFENSE CAPABILITY TO INHIBIT OR CONTAIN OUTSIDE FORCES, UNTIL THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY CAN ACT. HE IMPLIED THAT USG MUST DO MORE FOR TUNISIANS.

6. I EXPRESSED PERSONAL VIEW THAT TUNISIA'S SECURITY LIES, AND SHOULD CONTINUE TO LIE, ESSENTIALLY IN STRENGTH AND CONGENIALITY OF ITS SOCIETY, THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ITS APPARATUS OF ANTI-SUBVERSION AND CLOSENESS OF TIES WITH "FRIENDS" ABROAD. PRIME MINISTER AGREED IN GENERAL WITH MY OBSERVATION AND STRESSED THAT TUNISIA'S INTEREST IN BEEFING UP ITS

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 TUNIS 01917 02 OF 03 171709Z

MILITARY IS LIMITED TO OBTAINING EQUIPMENT WHICH IS "WITHIN REASON." HE SAID TUNISIAN GOVERNMENT DOES NOT INTEND TO BUY NEW-TYPE AIRCRAFT, SUCH AS "MIRAGES AND F-5S," FOR EXAMPLE. I OBSERVED THAT DILEMMA OBVIOUSLY FACING TUNISIA IS TO LOCATE ITEMS OF MODERN MILITARY EQUIPMENT THAT WILL BOTH MEET TUNISIA'S NEEDS, AND NOT BE EITHER TOO COSTLY AND/OR TOO COMPLEX. THIS, I BELIEVE, PROBABLY POSED AN INSURMOUNTABLE PROBLEM. I REVIEWED STATUS OF MY DISCUSSIONS WITH MINISTRY OF DEFENSE CONCERNING HAWK AND CHAPARRAL.

7. I ASKED PRIME MINISTER IF THERE WERE ANYTHING SPECIFIC THAT HE HAD IN MIND IN HIS SUGGESTION THAT USG SHOULD DO MORE FOR TUNISIA. HE REFERRED TO HIS CONVERSATIONS WITH PRESIDENT FORD LAST YEAR IN WHICH HE HAD MADE THE POINT THAT TUNISIA IS NOT "BEGGING" FOR ANYTHING IN PARTICULAR BUT RATHER WOULD LIKE THE US TO BE AS HELPFUL AS POSSIBLE IN ALL RESPECTS. I NOTED THAT THIS IS INDEED OUR POLICY AND THAT MY VIEW IS THAT, GIVEN OUR CONGRESSIONAL AND OTHER RESTRAINTS, US IS DOING REASONABLY WELL BY TUNISIA. WITH REGARD TO THREATS POSED BY ALGERIA AND LIBYA, I EXPRESSED VIEW THAT THESE THREATS ARE LESS MILITARY

THAN SUBVERSIVE AND IDEOLOGICAL, AND I NOTED THAT BOTH REGIMES ARE ALREADY FACING CHALLENGES FROM WITHIN THEIR OWN SOCIETIES. PRIME MINISTER AGREED WITH THIS OBSERVATION.

8. COMMENT: AS WE HAVE REPORTED EARLIER, TUNISIAN LEADERSHIP CONTINUES TO BE SPLIT ON HOW TUNISIA SHOULD RESPOND TO GROWING THREAT FROM ALGERIA AND LIBYA. SOME FAVOR ARMS BUILDUP, WHILE OTHERS SEE PITFALLS IN THIS APPROACH. WHILE QADHAFI'S CURRENT HARRASSMENT OF TUNISIANS IN LIBYA WORRIES TUNISIANS AND HAS INDUCED GOT TO CLOSE BORDER (TUNIS 1882), MORE FUNDAMENTAL CONCERN IS WITH ALGERIA. TUNISIA'S SUPPORT OF MOROCCAN POSITION ON SAHARA HAS NOT HELPED IN THIS REGARD, EVEN THOUGH GOT HAS SOUGHT TO BACK OFF A BIT IN THIS REGARD IN RECENT WEEKS. PRIME MINISTER'S CONCERNS ARE ECHOED IN OTHER QUARTERS HERE AND NO DOUBT PRESIDENT WILL RAISE THESE CONCERNS
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 TUNIS 01917 02 OF 03 171709Z

WITH VICE PRESIDENT ROCKEFELLER ON SATURDAY. WE

SECRET

NNN

SECRET

PAGE 01 TUNIS 01917 03 OF 03 171710Z

46

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEAE-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15

INR-07 CIAE-00 /056 W

----- 050063

P 171541Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2072

INFO WHITE HOUSE WASHDC PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY RABAT PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI PRIORITY
USCINCEUR

S E C R E T SECTION 3 OF 3 TUNIS 1917

USCINCEUR FOR POLAD

WHITE HOUSE FOR VICE PRESIDENT'S OFFICE - CAPT HOWE

ARE TOLD ON GOOD AUTHORITY THAT FOREIGN MINISTER
CHATTI RAISED WITH FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER SAUVAGNARGUES,
DURING LATTER'S VISIT HERE A FEW DAYS AGO, TUNISIA'S
NEEDS FOR FURTHER MILITARY ASSISTANCE. FRENCH
EVIDENTLY GAVE NO ASSURANCES. MEANWHILE, GERMAN
AMBASSADOR TELLS ME THAT FRG PROGRAM OF ASSISTING
TUNISIAN IN DEVELOPING MORE EFFECTIVE BORDER
SURVEILLANCE IS GETTING UNDERWAY. THIS INCLUDES
BETTER COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK BETWEEN HEADQUARTERS
AND BORDER UNITS AND CREATING HELICOPTER UNIT TO
PATROL BORDER.
SEELYE

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, MILITARY ASSISTANCE, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 MAR 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: BoyleJA
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976TUNIS01917
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760101-0029
From: TUNIS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760349/aaaabrpf.tel
Line Count: 299
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 6
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: BoyleJA
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23 APR 2004 by ElyME>; APPROVED <17 AUG 2004 by BoyleJA>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: AMBASSADOR'S FAREWELL CALL ON PRIME MINISTER: TUNISIA'S CONCERN WITH THREATS
TAGS: MASS, TS, LY, AG
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006